

New York, N. Y. Accounts

Commissioner

[Miscellaneous publications]

report on Office of City Clerk
and Board of Alderman. Examination

and audit for the period from January 1, 1911 to September 30, 1914. 1915

{MISC. PUBS.}

PW-2

A REPORT

112

A

001 068594

OFFICE OF CITY CLERK
AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN



EXAMINATION AND AUDIT

FOR THE PERIOD FROM

January 1, 1910, to September 30, 1914

By
LEONARD M. WALLSTEIN
COMMISSIONER OF ACCOUNTS

LIBRARY
PUBLIC AFFAIRS SERVICE
JUL 15 1985
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES



MC: 50/3681

A REPORT

ON

**OFFICE OF CITY CLERK
AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN**

EXAMINATION AND AUDIT

**FOR THE PERIOD FROM
January 1, 1910, to September 30, 1914**

By

**LEONARD M. WALLSTEIN
COMMISSIONER OF ACCOUNTS**

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

<http://www.archive.org/details/reportonofficeof00walliala>

CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF ACCOUNTS
MUNICIPAL BUILDING

LEONARD M. WALLSTEIN
COMMISSIONER

February 13, 1915.

HON. JOHN PURROY MITCHEL,

Mayor.

Sir:

I submit herewith the results of an examination and audit of the financial transactions of the office of the City Clerk and Board of Aldermen for the period from January 1, 1910, to September 30, 1914, during which period P. J. Scully was the City Clerk.

POWERS AND DUTIES:

Under charter provisions the City Clerk also serves as clerk of the Board of Aldermen and is required to keep specific records of its proceedings and to perform certain duties related thereto. He is made the custodian of all records and documents belonging to The City of New York, except as otherwise expressly provided, and is empowered to issue certified copies of same. He also is authorized to issue permits for signs, licenses to auctioneers and marriage licenses. For these services, and for recording, certifying and filing of records, documents, etc., specified fees are collected. For the performance of these duties in each of the boroughs

of the city he is empowered to appoint such deputies or clerks as are necessary.

The following is a list of the licenses and permits issued by the City Clerk, and services for which fees are charged:

The rates of fees with the exception of marriage licenses, which are regulated by the State law, are fixed by the Board of Aldermen.

In addition to the foregoing, "hunters' licenses" are issued for account of the State of New York, for which the charges are:

	State Fee.	City Fee.
Resident licenses	\$1.00	.10
Non-resident licenses	20.00	.50
Non-resident taxpayers' licenses.....	10.00	.50

The State fees are remitted monthly to the County Clerk for transmission to the State Conservation Commission. All other fees are remitted monthly to the City Chamberlain.

FINANCIAL OPERATION OF OFFICE OF CITY CLERK:

The receipts of the office for the period under review, shown in detail in Exhibit "A" hereto attached, were as follows:

Year.	Amount.
1910	\$117,682.03
1911	123,597.16
1912	133,770.63
1913	143,555.75
1914 (to Sept. 30)	<u>115,209.13</u>
	\$633,814.70
Less: Hunter's license fees received for account of State Conservation Commission	20,252.00
Total net receipts	\$613,562.70

The cost of maintaining the office for the same period, disclosed by an analysis of the total expenditures of the Office of the City Clerk, as shown in Exhibit "B," hereto attached, was as follows:

Year.	Salaries.	Printing, Stationery Contin- and Books.	Gencies.	Sundry.	Totals.
1910	\$91,949.56	\$3,017.43	\$1,800.00	.....	\$96,766.99
1911	94,279.43	1,785.30	1,550.00	.....	96,614.73
1912	98,802.83	2,342.47	1,680.00	.....	102,825.30
1913	105,491.12	2,508.67	1,926.16	.....	109,925.95
1914 (to Sept. 30)	79,985.48	1,568.75	1,459.05	.....	84,103.28
		Purchase of 2 safes.....		375.00	
		Moving office.....		715.00	
Totals ...	\$470,508.42	\$11,222.62	\$8,415.21	\$1,090.00	\$491,236.25
					\$491,236.25
		Profit of operation of office of City Clerk for the period.....			<u>\$122,326.45</u>

An examination of the records of the City Chamberlain shows that the net receipts of \$613,562.70 were duly received by him, and the remittances of amounts collected for "hunter's licenses" were verified by receipts from the County Clerk on file.

The total cost of maintenance of the Board of Aldermen and City Clerk for the period under review is set forth in a summary of appropriations, transfers of appropriations, special revenue bonds issued, expenditures and unexpended balances, hereto attached as Exhibit "B."

All unexpended balances existing at the close of the year are returnable to the general fund of the city.

OFFICE METHODS:

The number of marriage licenses issued by the City Clerk in each year is from 30,000 to 40,000. The present method of procedure employs a loose form of marriage license which receives a consecutive number when issued, and there is no record of the number of such licenses issued other than a slip which accompanies the return of the daily receipts to the cashier. Owing to the magnitude of these transactions the license forms should be consecutively numbered and bound in stub book form. Similar books also should be used for the issue of duplicate marriage licenses, and for certificates of marriage license searches.

Chapter 742, section 16, laws of 1907, provides that the State Board of Health shall furnish the City Clerk, through the County Clerk, with blank forms for marriage licenses and certificates, etc., but no provision is stated for furnishing them in bound form.

For the purpose of issuing certificates of filing with County Clerks

and Registers; qualifications and certificates to commissioners of deeds; certificates of comparisons and signatures; records of copies; acknowledgments, etc., there is used a style of book forms containing two counterfoils. In the use of these books a hard indelible pencil should be employed when making a counterfoil, as the present method of using pen and ink has, in many cases, left counterfoils wholly illegible.

INSPECTION WORK:

One of the functions of the City Clerk is to issue permits for electric signs. During our examination we were informed that, during 1914, two sergeants-at-arms of the Board of Aldermen were detailed to inspect and measure such signs; and that they discovered many signs larger than were specified in permits, and signs where no permits had been issued, thereby increasing the revenues from this source by several thousand dollars during a period of about nine months.

CARE OF RECORDS:

In addition to the records of the Board of Aldermen and those created in the business of his office, the City Clerk is custodian of the old and valuable records and documents belonging to the city. The room now used for this purpose is entirely inadequate for the proper care of the books and records of the office, and the present condition is somewhat chaotic. Adequate space should be allotted for the care of such archives most of which could not be replaced.

A card index system also should be installed to facilitate a ready reference to the records.

Under section 28 of the charter the records in the custody of the City Clerk are made admissible in evidence in all courts and places; and they are constantly being subpoenaed in legal matters.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the State Board of Health be requested and urged to furnish marriage licenses for the use of The City of New York in a particular form, to wit: That they should be bound in books, each license form being detachable from a permanent stub designed to record necessary record information as to the issued license; and that the licenses and their stubs be consecutively and correspondingly numbered under yearly series.

Also that similar stub-books be furnished for the issue of duplicate marriage licenses, and for certificates of marriage license searches.

2. That the services of sergeants-at-arms of the Board of Aldermen be utilized to make continuous inspection service as to electric signs, their compliance with permit requirements, etc.
3. That effective measures be taken to secure suitable and sufficient space for the care of the records of the Board of Aldermen and of The City of New York, which are in the custody of the City Clerk.
4. That a card index system be installed in the office of the City Clerk, whereby all records and documents may be susceptible of a ready reference.

Respectfully submitted,

LEONARD M. WALLSTEIN,

Commissioner of Accounts.

EXHIBIT "A"

OFFICE OF CITY CLERK

OFFICE OF CITY CLERK
SUMMARY OF RECEIPTS JANUARY 1 1810 TO SEPTEMBER 30 1814

EXHIBIT "B"
BOARD OF ALDERMEN AND CITY CLERK
SHOWING COST OF MAINTENANCE FOR YEAR 1910

Code	Amount of	Bond	Special	Revenue	Unexpended	Balance
No.	Title of Appropriation.	Appropriation.	Issues.		Expended.	
14	Salaries—General Administration	\$201,150.00	\$330.67		\$201,416.64	\$64.03
15	Contingencies—“	2,500.00	590.00		3,066.90	23.10
16	Salaries—President of Board....	5,500.00	9,775.00		11,963.43	3,311.57
17	City Clerk, Salaries—Manhattan..	19,450.00	112.89		19,562.89	.....
18	“ “ “ Marriage Bur.	14,350.00	.....		14,350.00	.....
19	“ “ “ The Bronx..	1,500.00	.....		1,500.00	.....
20	“ “ “ Brooklyn ..	12,456.00	18.09		12,474.09	.....
21	“ “ “ Queens	2,000.00	.....		2,000.00	.....
22	“ “ “ Richmond ..	1,500.00	29.18		1,529.18	.....
23	“ “ Contingencies	1,000.00	800.00		1,800.00	.....
Totals		<u>\$261,406.00</u>	<u>\$11,655.83</u>		<u>\$269,663.13</u>	<u>\$3,398.70</u>

Add:

Supplies from City Record:

Printing	16,439.70	
Stationery	4,477.23	
Books	673.98	
		21,590.91

Rental of offices of President of Board as furnished by Sinking Fund Commission.....

..... 2,603.35

Total cost of maintenance for year 1910

..... \$293,857.39

SHOWING COST OF MAINTENANCE FOR YEAR 1911

13	Salaries—General Administration	\$201,650.00	.....	\$201,503.27	\$146.73
R.B.L.1D	“ “ “	.....	1,066.96	1,046.71	20.25
“ 1E	“ “ “	.....	700.00	665.71	34.29
14	Contingenc’s“	2,500.00	.....	1,725.70	774.30
15	Salaries—President of Board....	20,500.00	.....	20,229.42	270.58
16	Contingencies “ “	2,500.00	.....	2,013.10	486.90
17	City Clerk, Salaries—Manhattan.	19,700.00	.....	19,700.00	.....
R.B.L.1D	City Clerk,“	.....	1,486.95	1,486.95	.....
18	“ “ “ Marriage Bur.	14,350.00	.....	14,350.00	.....
19	“ “ “ The Bronx.	1,500.00	.....	1,500.00	.....
20	“ “ “ Brooklyn ..	12,452.00	.....	12,448.00	4.00
21	“ “ “ Queens	2,000.00	.....	2,000.00	.....
22	“ “ “ Richmond ..	1,500.00	.....	1,500.00	.....
23	“ “ Contingencies	1,000.00	.....	1,000.00	.....
R.B.L.2F	“ “ .....	.....	700.00	550.00	150.00
“ 1B.	Clerk to Commission on Revision of Names of Streets in Brooklyn .....	.....	500.00	500.00	.....
“ 1C.	Stenographer to Commission on Municipal Autos....	.....	800.00	.....	800.00
Totals		<u>\$279,652.00</u>	<u>\$5,253.91</u>	<u>\$282,218.86</u>	<u>\$2,687.05</u>

Add:

Supplies from City Record:

Printing	8,593.31	
Stationery	3,069.53	
Books	1,700.45	
		13,363.29

Rental of offices of President of Board as furnished by Sinking Fund Commission.....

..... 3,905.00

Total cost of maintenance for year 1911

..... \$299,487.15

EXHIBIT "B"—(Continued)
BOARD OF ALDERMEN AND CITY CLERK
SHOWING COST OF MAINTENANCE FOR YEAR 1912

Code.	No. Title of Appropriation.	Amount of Appropriation.	Transfers.	Special Revenue Bond	Unexpended	Balances.
	30 Salaries—Board of Aldermen....	\$203,950.00	.....	.....	\$202,796.17	\$1,153.83
R.B.L1H.	" " " .....	.....	.....	\$1,397.22	1,397.19	.03
" 2H."	" " " .....	.....	.....	500.00	500.00	.....
31	President of Board...	20,700.00	.....	.....	20,316.52	383.48
32	City Clerk—Manhattan	35,000.00	.....	.....	34,985.89	14.11
R.B.L1H.	" " " .....	.....	.....	350.00	350.00	.....
" 2G."	" " " .....	.....	.....	1,100.00	1,100.00	.....
33	" " " The Bronx	1,500.00	.....	.....	1,500.00	.....
34	" " " Brooklyn..	14,300.00	.....	.....	14,300.00	.....
35	" " " Queens ..	2,000.00	.....	.....	2,000.00	.....
36	" " " Richmond	1,500.00	.....	.....	1,500.00	.....
37	Supplies and materials, Board of Aldermen	750.00	150.00	.....	878.30	31.70
38	Supplies and materials, President of Board.....	150.00	.....	.....	126.50	23.50
39	Supplies and materials, City Clerk	380.00	350.00	.....	.....	30.00
40	Repairs to furniture, etc., City Clerk	100.00	100.00	.....	.....	.....
41	Special contract obligations, President of Board.....	400.00	100.00	.....	260.31	39.69
42	Telephone service—Board of Aldermen	1,400.00	.....	.....	1,358.10	41.90
43	Telephone service—President of Board	700.00	.....	.....	430.88	269.12
44	Contingencies—B'rd of Aldermen	200.00	.....	.....	125.45	74.55
45	" Pres. of Board..	1,250.00	.....	.....	985.93	264.07
46	" City Clerk.....	1,220.00	400.00	.....	1,620.00	.....
47	Purchase of furniture, etc., City Clerk	300.00	.....	.....	60.00	240.00
R.B.L20	Stenographer, Commission on Taxicabs .....	.....	.....	500.00	499.98	.02
R.B.L19	Increase in salaries of Vice-Chairman of Board of Aldermen and Chairman of Committee on Finance, 1912.....	.....	.....	2,966.72	2,966.72	.....
R.B.L1F.	Salary, Secretary to Chairman of Committee on Finance, March 5 to December 31.....	.....	.....	1,233.87	1,233.87	.....
	Expenses of Aldermanic Committee on Investigation of Police Department .....	.....	.....	41,050.00	41,014.50	35.50
	Totals	\$285,810.00	.....	\$49,097.81	\$332,306.31	\$2,601.50
Add:						
	Supplies from City Record:					
	Printing .....	.....	8,414.19			
	Stationery .....	.....	3,496.97			
	Books .....	.....	3,185.11			
					15,096.27	
	Rental of office of President of Board, as furnished by Sinking Fund Commission.....	.....	.....	.....	3,905.00	.....
	Total cost of maintenance for year 1912.....	.....	.....	.....	\$351,307.58	.....

EXHIBIT "B"—(Continued)
BOARD OF ALDERMEN AND CITY CLERK
SHOWING COST OF MAINTENANCE FOR YEAR 1913

Code.	No.	Title of Appropriation.	Amount of Appropriation.	Transfers.	Issues.	Special Revenue Bond	Unexpended
	51	Salaries—Board of Aldermen....	\$212,400.00	.....	.....	\$208,868.84	\$3,531.16
	52	President of Board....	20,680.00	.....	.....	20,638.49	41.51
	53	City Clerk, Manhattan.	39,800.00	.....	.....	39,626.90	173.10
	54	“ “ The Bronx.	1,500.00	.....	.....	1,500.00	.....
	55	“ “ Brooklyn ..	18,500.00	.....	.....	18,416.13	83.87
	56	“ “ Queens	2,000.00	.....	.....	2,000.00	.....
	57	“ “ Richmond .	1,500.00	.....	.....	1,500.00	.....
	58	Fees and commissions, President of Board	900.00	.....	.....	440.82	459.18
	59	Office supplies, B'rd of Aldermen.	625.00	.....	.....	625.00	.....
	R.B.L.1J.	Office supplies, Board of Aldermen .....	.....	.....	750.00	737.50	12.50
	60	Office supplies, President of B'rd	250.00	380.00	.....	624.32	5.68
	61	General plant supplies, Board of Aldermen	100.00	517.44	.....	597.44	20.00
	62	Office supplies, City Clerk.....	800.00	1,073.05	.....	1,872.84	.21
	63	Transportation, expenses, etc., Board of Aldermen	100.00	48.05	.....	51.95	.....
	64	Carfares—President of Board....	100.00	10.00	.....	31.45	58.55
	65	Keeping records, etc., City Clerk.	700.00	640.00	.....	53.32	6.68
	66	Telephone service, etc., Board of Aldermen	1,391.00	107.52	.....	1,365.04	133.48
	66½	Telephone service, President of Board	462.84	120.00	.....	567.71	15.13
	R.B.L.20A	Committee on Buildings—Expenses of revision of Building Code .....	.....	.....	15,000.00	14,996.95	3.05
	Totals	.....	\$301,808.84	\$1,499.96	\$15,750.00	\$314,514.70	\$4,544.10

Add:

Supplies from City Record:

Printing	9,806.54
Stationery	3,130.56
Books	2,247.79

15,184.89

Rental of office of President of Board, as furnished by Sinking Fund Commission.....

3,905.00

Total cost of maintenance for year 1913.....

\$333,604.59

EXHIBIT "B"—(Continued)
BOARD OF ALDERMEN AND CITY CLERK
SHOWING COST OF MAINTENANCE FROM JANUARY 1, 1914,
TO SEPTEMBER 30, 1914

Code.	No. Title of Appropriation.	Amount of Appropriation.	Transfers.	Special Revenue Bond	Unexpended Balance at Sept.
	1 Salaries, Board of Aldermen.....	\$212,400.00	.....	.....	30,1914.
R.B.L.22	2 " President of Board.....	20,680.00	.....	.....	\$158,678.45 \$53,721.55
	3 " City Clerk	63,300.00	.....	\$5,970.00	14,971.86 5,708.14
	4 " Fees and commissions, President of Board..	500.00	.....	.....	4,972.50 997.50
	5 Office supplies, B'rd of Aldermen	635.00	.....	.....	105.97 394.03
	6 " " President of B'rd	515.00	500.00	.....	149.25 485.75
	7 " " City Clerk.....	1,190.00	500.00	.....	873.83 141.17
	9 Transportation	115.00	.....	.....	1,459.05 230.95
	12 Communication—Board of Aldermen	1,391.00	462.84	.....	578.55 1,275.29
	13 Communication—President of B'rd	462.84	462.84	.....	.....
	14 Contingencies	30.00	5,094.00	.....	1,096.83 4,027.17
R.B.L. 22A	Expense of moving City Clerk's office to new quarters..	.....	.....	715.00	715.00
R.B.L. 1K	Purchase of 2 safes, City Clerk .....	.....	.....	375.00	375.00
	Totals	\$301,218.84	\$6,094.00	\$7,060.00	\$231,298.33 \$83,074.51

Add:

Supplies from City Record:

Printing	17,213.03				
Stationery	1,879.03				
Books	294.14				
					19,386.20

Rental of office of President of Board, as furnished by Sinking Fund Commission.....	.....	.....	.....	2,928.75
Total cost of maintenance to September 30, 1914.....	.....	.....	.....	\$253,613.28

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES
JANUARY 1, 1910, TO SEPTEMBER 30, 1914

	1910.	1911.	1912.	1913.	1914.	(To Sept. 30) Totals.
From Appropriation						
Accounts	\$261,406.00	\$277,969.49	\$283,244.05	\$298,780.25	\$225,235.83	\$1,346,635.62
From Revenue Bond						
Issues	8,257.13	4,249.37	49,062.26	15,734.45	6,062.50	83,365.71
Supplies from City Record:						
Printing	16,439.70	8,593.31	8,414.19	9,806.54	17,213.03	60,466.77
Stationery	4,477.23	3,069.53	3,496.97	3,130.56	1,879.03	16,053.32
Books	673.98	1,700.45	3,185.11	2,247.79	294.14	8,101.47
Rental of offices of President of B'rd of Aldermen.....	2,603.35	3,905.00	3,905.00	3,905.00	2,928.75	17,247.10
Grand totals...	\$293,857.39	\$299,487.15	\$351,307.58	\$333,604.59	\$253,613.28	\$1,531,869.99

SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FALMOUTH



A 001 068 594 9

